

## AFTERNOON SESSION

At 2 o'clock p. m., President Heber J. Grant stated that the choir and congregation would sing, as the opening hymn: "The Spirit of God like a fire is burning."

After the song, Elder George Ray Maycock, president of the Kolob stake, offered prayer.

## PRESIDENT ANTHONY W. IVINS

It is a source of gratification, my brethren and sisters, that another opportunity is afforded us of assembling in general conference under the favorable circumstances which exist.

I stand before you this afternoon with great trepidation, facing this large congregation of people, and pray that I may have your support, and the support of our Father in Heaven, during the few moments which I expect to occupy.

## THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY VS. THE WISDOM OF MAN

As a basis for the remarks which I desire to make I will read briefly from the second general epistle of the Apostle Peter to the Church. He had been bearing testimony to the divinity of the mission of the Redeemer of the World, had recounted the many evidences of his divinity to which the people were witnesses, and concluded with these words:

"We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts. Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

"For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

The spirit of prophecy, my brethren and sisters, to which the scripture I have read refers, is the word of the Lord which comes to the Church, through the agencies he has provided.

It must always continue with the Church if one purposes of the Father, as they apply to his children, here upon earth, are to be accomplished, for without the word of prophecy, which is the word of the Lord, expressed through those whom he has appointed, and who have been sustained by the voice of the people who make up the membership of the Church, we are left to depend upon the wisdom of man, and if we are to judge the future by the past, the time will never come when the wisdom of man alone will be sufficient to lead us on to the ultimate ideal of the perfect life, to which we aspire.

At the afternoon meeting, on Tuesday, if we follow our usual mode of procedure, the names of the men who have been designated to direct the affairs of the Church at the present time, will be pre-

sented to you, and you will vote to sustain them as prophets, seers, and revelators.

I sometimes wonder if the keys of authority which belong to the office and calling of one who occupies this exalted position in the Church, is fully understood by the people.

#### CHARACTER AND DUTY OF PROPHETS, SEERS AND REVELATORS

A careful study of the etymology of the word and of the lives, works and character of the prophets of old makes clear the fact that a prophet was, and is, one called to act as God's messenger. He is to teach men the character of God, and define and make known to the people, his will. He is to denounce sin, and declare the punishment of transgression. He is to be above all else a preacher of righteousness, and when the people depart from the path which he has marked out for them to follow, is to call them back to the true faith. He is an interpreter of the scripture, and declares its meaning and application. When future events are to be declared he predicts them, but his direct, and most important calling is to be a forth-teller, or director of present policy, rather than a foreteller of that which is to come.

There is but little difference between the calling of a prophet and that of a seer, or revelator. Saul, who had been sent by his father on an errand which appeared to be impossible of accomplishment, said to the servant who accompanied him, let us return; but the servant, knowing that Samuel, the prophet of the Lord, was in the city where they chanced to be, replied: Let us go thither. Peradventure he can show us the way in which we are to go, and here we are told that before-time in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, thus he spake: "Come and let us go to the seer, for he that is now called a prophet, was before time called a seer."

The scripture also tells us that when King David was up in the morning, the word of the Lord came to the prophet Gad, David's seer, instructing him to deliver a certain message to the king.

It will thus be seen that the words prophet and seer are used inter-changeably, and have practically the same meaning. In the revelations which have been given for the direction of the Church, in the present dispensation, the Lord says:

"The duty of the president of the high priesthood is to preside over the whole Church, and to be like unto Moses, Yea, to be a seer, a revelator, a translator and prophet, having all the gifts of God, which he bestows upon the head of the Church."

I have made these introductory remarks, my brethren and sisters, in the hope that you may better understand the calling and responsibility which develops upon these men whom you sustain as the presiding authorities of the Church, to be prophets, seers and revelators to it.

As I have defined the calling and responsibility of a prophet,

you are my witnesses that these men who are before you today are discharging the responsibility which has been placed upon them. They are expounding the scriptures, calling men to repentance from sin and transgression, and pointing out the way which, if you walk in it, will lead you back into the presence of our Heavenly Father, and Jesus Christ, his Only Begotten Son.

OUR PERILOUS TIMES NEED THE DIRECTING POWER OF PROPHECY

I believe that you, my brethren and sisters, and you my friends who may be present, who are not members of the Church, but are interested in and carefully studying existing conditions in the world, will agree with me in the conclusion which I have reached, that if there has ever been a time when the spirit of prophecy has been needed to compose and harmonize the conflicting forces which are warring one against the other. when the word of the Lord is necessary in order that these questions, which are shaking the very foundations upon which our religious, social and political structures are builded may be settled, it is the day in which we live.

In some localities the social laws which have from the beginning of time, as we count it, given protection to the family relation, and made possible the development of the world to its present social condition and civilization, are entirely ignored, while in others they are perilously near chaos.

The world war, instead of bringing the allied nations closer together, as we had hoped that it might, threatens, because of the financial complications which have arisen, to drive us farther apart, while in the school of religion conflicting opinions threaten to bring chaos to existing theories regarding our relationship to God, and the present and future state of man, as it applies to eternal life.

Already the people are assembling in two hostile camps, one calling itself fundamentalists, the other modernists, one professing to base its conclusions on the truths brought out by modern scientific research, the other on the Word of the Lord, as it has come down to us in sacred writ, regardless of its harmony, or lack of harmony with modern thought, or the onward march of scientific investigation.

It is not a new controversy, but one which has characterized every gospel dispensation which has existed from the beginning to the present.

Men highly educated, and trained in certain fields of scientific research, with but limited knowledge of the great plan of human redemption, provided by the Lord for the blessing of his children, proceed to point out certain obscure passages which may be found in the Bible, and which may have no bearing at all on the relationship of man to his Maker, thus seeking to bring the entire book to ridicule, and destroy faith in it as a divine revelation from God.

On the other hand men knowing little of the great truths which have come to the world through the investigations of men, denounce

all modern thought, sometimes even when it is demonstrated truth, if it does not appear to harmonize with their interpretation of the written word of the Lord.

The controversy, it appears to me, is one which might be more readily composed if the parties to it better understood both sides of the question under discussion, and were governed by a spirit of tolerance and reason, rather than one of dogmatism.

#### DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FUNDAMENTALIST AND MODERNIST

What is the difference between a fundamentalist and a modernist? If asked this question I would answer somewhat as follows: A fundamentalist is one who believes in the teachings and customs of the past, as they have come down to us by means of the written word contained in sacred writ, or secular history, preferring, where the ideas and teachings of today conflict with the past, and where definite evidence is lacking to establish one or the other theory to accept the old, rather than the more modern interpretation.

The modernist prefers, and accepts, the customs, philosophy and thought of the present in preference to that of the remote past.

The fact that a person may profess to be a fundamentalist is no evidence that he is either right or wrong, and the same rule may be applied to the modernist. Fundamentalism is that upon which a system or structure is builded.

In the first century after the ministry of the Redeemer of the world many conflicting opinions prevailed upon the subject of religion. Numerous churches were established, each professing to be followers of Christ, while differing greatly in creed. Paganism and idolatry were almost universal except among the Hebrew people, and even among them some were converted to the various systems which prevailed.

In the confusion which ensued, Mohammed, a descendant of Abraham, through his son, Ishmael, seeing the danger which threatened, arose and declared that there was but one God, the God of his father, Abraham, and called his people away from the worship of idols, to the worship of a living but invisible God. To the present day this doctrine remains the fundamental faith of Islam.

Buddha established a great system of religion on the theory that the spirit of man is eternal, that it may come to earth and tabernacle in the flesh at different periods of probation, perhaps more than once in the body of a man, perhaps in the body of an animal, if the man has proven to be unworthy, until in time it may go into the presence of God, or Nirvana. This is fundamental to the faith of the followers of Buddha. Thus we see that the Moham-medan and Buddhist, while greatly differing in creed, are both fundamentalists, but that is no evidence that either is right or wrong.

The same may be said in truth of the modernist. Looking back

over the history of the past it is plain that man cannot with safety ignore the lessons which it teaches, for truth, no matter when revealed, remains the same, and that great truths have been made known to man in the remote past cannot be denied.

Neither can we ignore the truths which have come to the world as a result of scientific research in the dispensation in which we live. The sure anchor, then, upon which we are safe in building our structure, is demonstrated truth, whether it be the truth of the remote past, or the living present. Thus we become both fundamentalists and modernists, with our feet firmly planted on solid ground.

#### WHENCE CAME MAN, AND WHITHER GOETH HE?

The question most discussed in the present controversy is that phase which deals with the origin and destiny of man. Whence came man, and whither goeth he?

Without reference to the many theories which have existed upon this question, and which still exist, I desire to refer briefly to the one which is today greatly disturbing the minds of the people. Was man created by the decree of God, our Father, and placed upon the earth in his present form, or is he the creature of some natural process of development, which has in the course of the aeons which have passed brought him to where he is?

The suggestion of Darwin, the great scientist, that man, by a process of natural selection and gradual development, may have evolved from a lower order of animal life to what he now is, although he did not declare this a fact, but only a theory, has resulted in much discussion, and too often in bitter controversy.

Closely allied to the Darwinian theory, but still quite different is the theory of evolution, which is being so widely discussed, and I sometimes think so generally misunderstood today.

Evolution is the process of evolving, or becoming developed. An unfolding or growth, from a latent state, or from a pre-arranged plan.

#### WHAT IS THE ATTITUDE OF THE CHURCH ON THIS QUESTION?

Naturally many, many people are asking, "What is the attitude of the Church on this important question, as it applies to the existence of man?" Let me answer briefly.

The foundation of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints rests upon faith in God, the Eternal Father, and in his Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost

We believe that God is an existent, living personality, and that man was created in his image. "In the image of God created he him, male and female created he them."

We believe that Jesus Christ was, and is the Son of God, the Only Begotten of the Father in the flesh, immaculately conceived and born of the Virgin Mary. That through the atonement wrought

out by him all men are redeemed from the penalty of death, pronounced upon our father Adam, through the resurrection from the grave, which he made possible, and that by obedience to the divine principles of right living which he taught, mankind may be redeemed from personal sin, and brought back into the presence of the Father, to enjoy the fellowship and association of the Son.

We believe that the Holy Ghost is the agency through which the will of the Father is communicated to his children, here upon earth. That it takes of the things of the Father, and manifests them unto man. It bears record of the Father and the Son, is our comfort in sorrow and distress, our strength in weakness, and our guide when in doubt. It is the Spirit of the Lord, the light which lighteneth everything that cometh into the world, and with which all men are endowed in a greater or less degree. It is the spirit of knowledge, by which man became a responsible agent, knowing good from evil, thus becoming answerable for the deeds done while here in probation, an account of which all men must render when they stand before the bar of God to be judged according to their works.

These doctrines are as old as the revealed will of the Lord to the inhabitants of the earth. It is, always has been, and will continue to be the doctrine of the Church. From it the Church has never receded, it never can recede; it is fundamental, and our faith in it makes us fundamentalists.

Unlike the sectarian Christian denominations of the world, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints believes and teaches, that birth into this life is not the beginning of the existence of man, nor is death the end of it, but that the spirits of all men existed in a pre-mortal state, before coming to this earth to be clothed upon with mortality. That after death they return to the spirit world to await the resurrection, when they will come forth from the grave, with glorified, immortal bodies, to receive the glory and exaltation to which their works while in mortality entitle them.

We believe that the earth is constantly undergoing changes which will eventually restore it to its paradisiacal glory, and make it a fit abode for glorified man.

We believe all that God has revealed, all that he does now reveal, and we believe that he will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.

If, then, to have our faces constantly toward the future, if to be forward looking, forward moving men and women, if to believe that great stores of knowledge, hidden treasures of knowledge, are yet to be revealed by men who have the spirit of the pioneer, which impels them to reach out into new and unknown fields of endeavor, whether it be in science, sociology, or exploration, if this, I say, is modernism, and if these changes which have come, and which are to come in the future, through the exercise of the intelligence of man, which is the intelligence of God, and which is based upon demon-

strated truth, and not theory, is evolution, then are we evolutionists.

If, however, to be in harmony with modern thought we must renounce our faith in a living, personal God, the Creator of heaven and earth, not only the earth upon which we dwell, but the universe of which we form so small a part, that he holds dominion over it, shapes the destiny of its inhabitants, and controls the laws by which it is governed; if we are to deny the knowledge which has come to us by direct revelation from heaven that Jesus Christ is the only begotten of the Father; if we are to deny the truth which has been revealed which teaches that man was created in the image of God, was so in the beginning and will always remain so, while he goes on in intelligent development forever; if to be in harmony we are to renounce a single doctrine of revealed truth which has come to us, we unhesitatingly separate ourselves from modern thought and theory, and confidently await the time when revealed truth, whether it be the result of scientific research or the revealed word of the Lord, will vindicate our faith in his word, which through his mercy has come to us in this, the greatest of all dispensations of the world's history.

The earth and all that is upon it, the sea and all that is in it did not come into existence by chance. Man is not the accidental product of chance. We admit the changes which have come, and believe that others of mighty import are before us, but in it all the Church sees not a thing of chance, but a definite plan, being shaped and moulded by a master mind, for the accomplishment of a divine purpose.

#### THE REVEALED WORD OF GOD TO US CONCLUSIVE PROOF

Time will not permit a presentation of the many evidences which exist in support of this doctrine of the pre-existence and future destiny of man. I ask your indulgence, however, while I refer to a few of the outstanding facts in relation to it.

The life, ministry and teachings of the Redeemer of the World are sufficient, alone, definitely to settle the existing controversy. We know that there are those who do not regard the written word, as it is contained in the scripture as satisfactory proof, but to us it should be conclusive.

We concede to all men the right to believe as they choose, but to members of the Church we appeal to remain steadfast in their faith in the revealed word of the Lord.

There is one thing which characterizes his word which has always appealed to me. It never comes to us as an hypothesis, but always as a definite fact. In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And God said let us make man in our image, after our likeness. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him, male and female created he them.

There is nothing hypothetical in this, nothing which admits of various interpretations, if we are to define words in their real meaning. It is a definite abstract statement of fact. The exact

process by which this was accomplished we do not know, nor is it essential that we know it, the fact is sufficient, and it will never be disproved by scientific research or otherwise, because it is the truth.

#### THE PRE-EXISTENCE OF JESUS CHRIST THE LOGICAL OUTCOME

That Christ lived in mortality is admitted by all people who are familiar with the history of his time, whether they are believers or not. That he was condemned and crucified on Calvary is not denied, and that after his crucifixion and resurrection from the dead he appeared to his disciples, and to many of the Saints with his glorified body is testified to by those who saw and communed with him.

Christ frequently declared that he was with the Father before he came to earth, and took upon him mortality, and that he returned to the Father after his work among men had been accomplished. That he revealed himself to the people of the world before his earthly existence, is plainly declared in the scripture, as the following will show.

Soon after the confusion of tongues, at the time of the building of the Tower of Babel, Jared, a prophet of the Lord, led a colony of people from the old world to the new. The brother of this man Jared had gone out to plead with the Lord in behalf of his people, when the word of the Lord came to him, as follows:

"Believest thou the words which I shall speak? And he answered: Yea, Lord, I know that thou speakest the truth, for thou art a God of truth, and canst not lie.

"And when he had said these words, behold, the Lord showed himself unto him, and said: Because thou knowest these things ye are redeemed from the fall; therefore ye are brought back into my presence: Therefore I show myself unto you.

"Behold, I am he who was prepared from the foundation of the world to redeem my people. Behold, I am Jesus Christ. In me shall all mankind have light, and that eternally, even they who shall believe on my name; and they shall become my sons and daughters. Seest thou that ye are created after my own image? Yea, even all men were created in the beginning after mine own image. Behold, this body which ye now see is the body of my spirit; and man have I created after the body of my spirit; and even as I appear to thee to be in the spirit, will I appear unto men in the flesh."

At a later date Samuel, a Lamanite, prophesied to the Nephites that Christ would be born at a certain date, and would appear to the people of this continent, and that he was the Redeemer of the World. Unbelievers, as has always been the case, were bitterly opposed to this doctrine, and declaring that the date fixed by Samuel had passed, set a day when all who professed faith in his teachings should be put to death. In this crisis Nephi cried unto the Lord in behalf of those who were believers, with the following result:

"And it came to pass that he cried mightily unto the Lord, and behold the voice of the Lord came unto him saying:



"Lift up your head and be of good cheer; for, behold, the time is at hand, and on this night shall the sign be given, and on the morrow come I into the world, to show unto the world; that I will fulfil all that which I have caused to be spoken by the mouth of my holy prophets.

"Behold, I come unto my own, to fulfil all things which I have made known unto the children of men from the foundation of the world, and to do the will both of the Father and the Son. And behold the time is at hand, and this night shall the sign be given."

It was the voice of Christ, the Redeemer of the world, proclaiming to man in mortality his coming and the following day the babe of Bethlehem was born.

What evidence, my brethren and sisters, do we require more conclusive than this, of the ante-mortal existence of the Redeemer of the world?

#### MAN ALONE ENDOWED WITH REASON

Of all created things man alone is endowed with reason, which is the glory and intelligence of God. Of man alone the Creator has said: The man has become as one of us, knowing good and evil.

#### BY REASON'S EXERCISE MAN GOES FORWARD

It is by the exercise and application of this endowment that man goes forward, and will continue to go forward, forever. By the application of the intelligence of man, which is the intelligence of God, conditions are changed, and may become either better or worse. Remove the application of this intelligence and we have no knowledge of anything in nature which has gone forward, but we do know that the highest degree of perfection reached by man in development, when bereft of it, may rapidly retrograde, whether it applies to things of nature, individuals, communities or nations, and even where the intelligence of man has been applied to its fullest extent, but without the sure word of prophecy, without the supporting power of the Creator, our Father and God, chaos has resulted and it will continue to result, for it is the eternal decree of God that man whom he has placed here upon earth, shall recognize him, otherwise he cannot go on in eternal progression.

#### "IN THE BEGINNING, GOD"

My knowledge of geology, which is limited, was obtained through study of that subject from books written by J. Dorman Steele whose works on science were probably more generally used in my school days than any other. In conclusion I wish to read briefly from his *Fourteen Weeks in Geology*, the following:

"We have traced in the dim light of the past the history of our earth and its inhabitants. Everywhere we have found a divine hand shaping and moulding to accomplish a divine ideal. Was man created by God's fiat, or by some intermediate process of secondary causes? Alas for the impotence of science, and the scope of our finite intelligence. Primeval man shows no sign of development from the higher tribes of animals. No fossil yet found is a link between him and the monkey. No ape ever made any improvement on the condition in which he was born. Man, on the other

hand never stays where he starts, he continually progresses. In the beginning God. We can add nothing to the old Hebrew declaration. The study of science ought never to lead one astray from this great fundamental thought. God has assuredly never written anything in nature contradictory of himself. Science and religion are alike his offspring, both will ultimately vindicate him and his attributes. Forgetting then the rancor and bitterness of the past in the joy of newly found truth, they will clasp hand and together cast the crowns of their triumphs, the triumphs of science and Christianity, at the feet of their common author, and God will be proclaimed Lord of all."

**LISTEN TO THE WORD OF GOD. NO TRUTH WILL CONTRADICT IT**

My brethren and sisters, may these fundamental truths remain fixed in your minds, let nothing lead you away from them. Listen to the word of prophecy, as it comes to you through these men who sit before you this afternoon and I promise that you will never be led astray. No development of science will ever contradict the revealed word of the Lord, which has come to us. For the moment theories may appear to be in conflict with his revealed word, but demonstrated truth will always be in harmony with it, for he is the author of all truth.

That his blessing may continue with us, and his protecting arm be over us, I humbly pray, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

A sacred solo: "How beautiful upon the mountains," was sung by Louise Watson.

**ELDER GEORGE ALBERT SMITH**

I believe I fully sense the importance of this occasion and the value of the time that is passing for this great congregation. Of myself I have little to say, except to announce my belief in the gospel of Jesus Christ. During the two sessions of this conference my soul has been enriched by the truths that have been announced by those who have addressed us, and the music that seems almost divine. I have had the privilege of grasping the hands of dozens of my brethren and sisters who live in remote places, and who have left their homes and their own affairs, and have paid their expenses to come here to meet in this great conference. I am sure that when it is concluded the feeling will abound in the heart of each—that it has been well worth while.

**AN IMPORTANT SUBJECT**

President Ivins touched upon a subject, and I regret that he did not take more time to enlarge upon it, as I know he is capable of doing, to our blessing. He reminded me of a statement made only a short time ago with reference to what has been going on in Tennessee, where some of the brightest minds of this world were