

SECOND DAY

MORNING SESSION

At 10 o'clock, Monday morning, October 5, 1925, the meeting in the Tabernacle was opened by President Heber J. Grant who announced that the choir and congregation would sing, "Come, come, ye Saints."

After the song, Elder Bryant S. Hinckley, President of the Liberty stake of Zion, offered the opening prayer.

A solo, "The Seer, the Seer, Joseph the Seer," was sung by William Russell.

ELDER ORSON F. WHITNEY

DIVINE REVELATION

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints stands for the doctrine of divine revelation, immediate, continuous and direct. "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." Such is the language of one of our Articles of Faith, written for the Church by its founder, Joseph Smith, prophet, revelator and seer.

My reason for referring to the subject at this time is a remark attributed to Colonel William Jennings Bryan, of honored memory, during the famous Evolution trial at Dayton, Tennessee. He is reported to have said that to destroy the Bible would be to destroy revealed religion.

MAN IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

Before going any further into that, I wish to say that I was in full sympathy with the Great Commoner in his general attitude on that historic occasion. I believe that when God made man in His own image, He made a man, and not a monkey, nor any other animal out of which man has evolved. I do not believe that the first of our race was a savage, or a cave man, who courted his wife with a club and carried her off by force. Such creatures there may have been, and there may be now. I do not dispute the findings and the facts of science—real science—which is knowledge, not guess-work. But I do deny that the great father of the human family was a creature of that kind.

ADAM'S ANTECEDENTS

Adam was no ordinary character. How could he be, with such a mission and such antecedents as were his? In the heavens, before this earth was formed, he was Michael the Archangel, leader of the

loyal spirit hosts that vanquished Lucifer and his rebellious legions, winning the right to take bodies upon this planet, to become "souls" capable of endless increase and advancement. What Latter-day Saint can doubt that Adam was among "the noble and great," referred to in the Book of Abraham as "rulers," chosen before they were born into this world to play leading parts in the divine drama having as its purpose the uplift and promotion of "the lesser intelligences" who became God's sons and daughters—the end designed by the all-wise, all-benevolent Creator from the beginning?

THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL

Bear in mind that the Gospel of Christ is not a mere life boat or fire escape—a way out of a perilous situation. It is all this and more. It is the path to endless glory and exaltation, the plan of eternal progression, designed by the wisdom of the Gods before the foundation of the world. Adam's fall was a part of the great plan. It brought death, spiritual and temporal death—for Divine Justice demands a penalty for every transgression,—but it also produced the human race, so far as mortal bodies are concerned, a race redeemed by the great Atoning Sacrifice, which paid Adam's debt, mended the broken law, reposed the unbalanced scale, and restored the equilibrium of right. Thenceforth man, by pursuing the path marked out for him, might go on to perfection. It was Adam's mission to bring us into this world. It is Christ's mission to lift us up out of this world, when the object of our sojourn here is accomplished.

THE DISPENSATIONS

Adam was the first to receive and obey the Gospel, revealed to him out of Eternity at the very beginning of Time. Since his day it has been upon the earth repeatedly, in a series of dispensations, of which this is the greatest and the last. Adam presides over all the gospel dispensations, including the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times—he presides over them all, just as the President of the Church presides over all the Stakes of Zion and all the outside Missions, though each has its own immediate presiding authority. Joseph Smith is the immediate head of this dispensation, and Adam is the general head of all. Standing next to Christ in the Priesthood, whenever that divine power is revealed from heaven to earth, "it is by Adam's authority." So says Joseph Smith.

The world has not seen the last of Father Adam. He is coming again, as the Ancient of Days, to fulfill the prophecy of Daniel. He will come to the valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman, where of old he blessed his posterity, foretelling what should befall them to the latest generation. He will call a council and assemble his righteous descendants, to prepare them for the glorious advent of the King of Kings.

This is a part of the divine program, as made known by modern revelation.

NEITHER APE NOR CAVE MAN

Dismiss from your minds, my hearers—if any of you entertain the notion—that Adam, the Ancient of Days, the great Prince and Patriarch of our race, was ever a jungle-inhabiting ape, or even an unenlightened cave man. He knew more about religion than all the theologians of the world combined. He knew more about science—the sources of science—than any evolutionist has ever dreamt of knowing. How can anyone whose soul has been fed with the revelations of God, whose mind has been illumined by the spirit of the Gospel, the gift of the Holy Ghost, conceive of Adam, the first of the human race, as anything less than the Bible represents him to be—a man formed in the image of his Maker?—which is tantamount to saying that the Maker is in the form of man.

BRYAN ANSWERED

And now as to that remark of Colonel Bryan's. Is it a fact that the destruction of the Bible would mean the destruction of revealed religion? According to my reckoning there are at least three books, in addition to the Bible, that would have to be destroyed before revealed religion could perish. I refer to the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price, which three, with the Bible, are the accepted doctrinal standards of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. All these sacred volumes have to do with revealed religion, and they would have to be destroyed before it could see destruction. Even then it would survive if a man like Joseph Smith remained, to receive from God the revelations of His will.

NOT DEPENDENT UPON BOOKS

Revelation does not depend upon books. It is an eternal principle, a perennial, ever-flowing fountain. Books may come and books may go, but revelation goes on forever.

The Bible is one of the best books in creation. We do not undervalue it. To the Latter-day Saints it is the word of the Lord, save for the errors that have crept into it through faulty translation. But it is not the source of eternal truth, nor the foundation of all righteousness. No book can claim that distinction. Religion could exist without the Bible, and it did exist, as revealed from Heaven, before that ancient volume was compiled.

There were prophets before Moses, he who wrote the Pentateuch or first five books of the Bible; and their inspired utterances (some of which have been brought to light in modern days) are just as sacred as the writings of Israel's great law-giver. But they are no substitute for revelation; they do not constitute the foundation of religion. Religion rests upon the Rock of Revelation, and that rock is Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world.

Some critics think they have discovered that Moses did not write the books attributed to him. But there was no such thought

in the mind of the Prophet Joseph Smith, when he revised, by the Spirit of Revelation, the writings of Moses, as they now appear in the Pearl of Great Price. He plainly identifies Moses with the authorship of the Book of Genesis. Surely the testimony of a prophet of God is quite as worthy of consideration as the theories of college students and the carpings of "higher criticism."

The Book of Mormon is also the word of the Lord, and that it was translated correctly, we have the Lord's declaration to the Three Witnesses. But the Book of Mormon is not the basis of our religious faith. It rests upon a much solidier foundation.

The Bible is not the Gospel; neither is the Book of Mormon; though both may be said to contain it. Such books are records of the Gospel's experience among men, and are a means of preserving a knowledge of the truth and handing it down to posterity. Books are a great convenience, an almost priceless boon, but they are not absolutely indispensable. Religion could live without them.

THE SCIENCE OF SCIENCES

But it could not live without God. He is the Source of all true religion and all true science, revealed or unrevealed. What is science but a part of religion, a branch or form of revelation? And what is religion but the science of all sciences—the science of eternal life? Music, poetry, and other arts—they also are forms of revelation, means used by the Giver of every good gift to make known the beautiful and the sublime—things that we "seek after," and ought to seek, for they are portions of the Divine Message, accessories to the Everlasting Gospel.

THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL

The Bible is a history of God's dealings with an ancient people—the House of Israel—the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in whom Jehovah purposed to bless all nations, and did so when He came through the lineage of those Hebrew patriarchs as the Redeemer of mankind. He also blessed the world when he dispersed his chosen people among the nations, thus sprinkling them with the blood of the faithful, the blood that believes, and with spirits answering to that blood. The Bible is likewise a prophecy of God's intentions toward the human family, and a repository of laws and ordinances that His ancient people were commanded to observe and obey.

LAWS ACTIVE AND OBSOLETE

Some of those laws are still in force, notwithstanding the lapse of ages. Others are obsolete, out of date. This cannot be said of the Ten Commandments, the Sermon on the Mount, or the principles of the Everlasting Gospel; but it can be said of many parts of the Holy Scriptures. They make good reading, but their day is past; they are not in force upon the present generation.

The same is true of parts of the Book of Mormon and parts of the Doctrine and Covenants. They have no reference to us whatever; and I'll prove it in a twinkling.

MODERN ILLUSTRATIONS

In the month of January, 1847, the main body of the Latter-day Saints were encamped upon the Missouri River, prior to crossing the great plains to the Rocky Mountains. President Brigham Young, who was then the head of the Church, voiced to its members "the word and will of the Lord," now constituting Section 136 of the book of Doctrine and Covenants. It directed all the people of the Church and those who journeyed with them to be organized into companies of hundreds, fifties and tens (meaning wagons) preparatory to the passage of the plains. This meant that they were to yoke up their ox teams, hitch them to their covered wagons, and organize as directed, "with a covenant and promise to keep all the commandments and statutes of the Lord our God."

Now, this part of the revelation is still alive and in force. We are all required to keep the Lord's commandments, such as apply to our case and condition. But we are not required to hitch up ox teams, organize into companies of hundreds, fifties and tens, and cross the plains to the Rocky Mountains. Yet that requirement, obsolete as to us, was the word and will of the Lord to our fathers and mothers, our grandfathers and grandmothers, encamped upon the Missouri River in January, 1847.

Another illustration: Many years ago there came to Salt Lake City a learned prelate of the Greek Catholic Church. He visited one of our Sacrament meetings, and was greatly shocked to see the Saints sipping water instead of wine at the table of the Lord. He afterwards said to me: "Why do you do this? Jesus Christ authorized the use of wine when he instituted the Sacrament at Jerusalem." "Yes," I assented, "and He also authorized wine when He instituted the same ordinance among the Nephites here in America, as told in the Book of Mormon. But what has that to do with us? We are living in another dispensation. We are not governed by what Jesus told the Jews to do, nor by what he told the Nephites to do. We are governed by what He tells the Latter-day Saints to do; and the latest word that comes from Him through his living oracle at the head of the Church, must always take precedence over any former commandment given by Him to us or to any other people. We also will use wine in the Sacrament whenever the Lord requires it; but since He has said that it matters not what we eat or drink at such times, so long as we do it with an eye single to His glory, we use water instead."

THE CHURCH OF THE LIVING GOD

No book is good enough to preside over the Church of God and direct its activities. Books are not a sufficient guide for a pro-

gressive people on their way to the celestial kingdom. They are good as far as they go, but they do not go far enough. We have something better—a living, heaven-inspired Priesthood, with the restored Gospel, the gifts of the Holy Ghost, and the principle of immediate and continuous revelation. Other churches are built upon books, traditions, decrees of councils and synods, private interpretations, man-made doctrines, maybe-so's and peradventures. But the Church of the Living God stands where He has placed it, upon the Rock of Divine Revelation, and the gates of hell cannot prevail against it.

A BRAVE FIGHT

No, Friend Bryan. You meant well, and you made a brave fight for the truth as you saw it, though somewhat hampered by tradition, and probably by environment. And the Lord will bless you for it and remember you when He makes up his jewels. But you fell short, through lack of further light and understanding.

No, the destruction of the Bible would not destroy all that God has revealed. It would not destroy what the other good books contain, nor seal up the heavens against future revelation. It would remove only a history or a hand-book of religion, one of the means used by the Almighty to preserve among men the truth as Heaven has revealed it.

TRUTH THE ETERNAL

What is Truth? Joseph Smith says: "It is the knowledge of things as they are, as they have been, and as they will be." John Jaques, inspired by the Muse of Poesy, which is only another name for the God of Truth, built upon the same great thought when he gave us this glorious hymn:

O say what is truth? 'Tis the fairest gem
That the richest of worlds can produce;
And priceless the value of truth will be when
The proud monarch's costliest diadem
Is counted but dross and refuse.

Yes, say, what is truth? 'Tis the brightest prize
To which mortals or Gods can aspire;
Go search in the depths where it glittering lies,
Or ascend in pursuit to the loftiest skies;
'Tis an aim for the noblest desire.

The sceptre may fall from the despot's grasp
When with winds of stern justice he copes,
But the pillar of truth will endure to the last,
And its firm-rooted bulwarks outstand the rude blast
And the wreck of the fell tyrant's hopes.

Then say what is truth? 'Tis the last and the first,
 For the limits of time it steps o'er:
 Though the heavens depart and the earth's fountains burst,
 Truth, the sum of existence, will weather the worst,
 Eternal, unchanged, evermore.

ELDER DAVID O. MCKAY

AUTHORIZATION OF CHRIST TO WITNESSES OF HIM

"But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

These men who were to be witnesses were eye witnesses of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that is the principal fact to which they were to bear witness in all parts of Judea, Samaria and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.

THE REALITY OF CHRIST AS DEITY

My beloved brethren and sisters, in the world today belief in Jesus Christ is too perfunctory, too conventional. The reality of Christ as Deity does not seem to possess the souls of men. The resurrected Lord is a something apart from most men's lives. I think I cannot better illustrate this thought than to read a few lines written by one of the soldiers in Flanders, when he was in the midst of shot and shell and facing death. Writing of the Christ he says:

"We had forgotten you, or very nearly,
 You didn't seem to touch us very nearly.
 Of course we thought about you now and then—
 Especially in any time of trouble—
 We knew that you were good in time of trouble—
 But we are very ordinary men.

"Now, we remember, over here in Flanders—
 (It is not strange to think of you in Flanders)—
 This hideous warfare seems to make things clear.
 We never thought about you much in England—
 But now that we are far away from England—
 We have no doubts, we know that you are here.

"We think about you kneeling in the Garden—
 Ah, God, the agony of that dread Garden—
 We know you prayed for us upon the cross.
 If anything could make us glad to bear it
 'Twould be the knowledge that you willed to bear it—
 Pain, death, the uttermost of human loss!"

Too many in the pseudo Christian world today can say as truthfully as the soldier:

"We had forgotten you, or very nearly—
 You do not seem to touch us very nearly."

The reality of God the Father, the reality of Jesus Christ, the