

willing to go, I am willing to stay, I am willing to do whatever you want me to do." With tears in my eyes, I listened as the president read that letter, and I thought, "God bless such a man."

THE SPIRIT OF SACRIFICE

There is the spirit of this work, there is the spirit that makes this thing go, that holds me and holds you—the real spirit of sacrifice. Willing to go on missions? Yes, anxious to go, to let everybody know that God has spoken, that we have the knowledge of God, the testimony of it, the same Christ our Lord that was crucified, whose resurrection the people in all the world are celebrating today. He has put into our hearts the knowledge that the greatest thing that we have to do and that his Church will forever have to do, so far as I know, is to proclaim this gospel, to spread this truth, to bring people into the same way of thinking, the same spirit and power that is in the priesthood and in the Church, the same happiness, the same joy, the same blessing, the same salvation. That is the greatest work that is before you and me, and we ought to be anxiously engaged in such a work, and not wait until we are commanded in all things; for he that waits until he is commanded, and does nothing until he is commanded, the same is a slothful servant and unworthy.

MAY THE LORD GLORIFY HIS WORK

I pray, my brethren and sisters, that the Lord will magnify and glorify his work. We can't do it; but he will do it through us,—through you, through me, and men and women like you and me; for it is his work. It is by his power, as President Grant read to you, in that greeting this morning. It is the Lord we say who has done it. As stated in the Holy Bible (Psalm 100): "It is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves," so it is he that hath made this work and brought it to pass, and put the power and the spirit in it, which no man can do; but with that spirit in us we can conquer the world for righteousness, for peace on earth, good will toward all men, which I humbly pray he will hasten, in his time, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Following the sermon by President Nibley, the choir and congregation sang, "The Spirit of God like a fire is burning."

ELDER ORSON F. WHITNEY

APROPOS OF EASTER DAY: "WE STAND FOR AN INDIVIDUAL TESTIMONY OF THE DIVINITY OF JESUS CHRIST"

The adoption by the Mutual Improvement Associations of this their latest slogan was most opportune. For it comes at a time when the question of Christ's divinity is being widely agitated. Someone has wittily said that the automobile is fast resolving the

human race into two great classes—the quick and the dead. Even so, though in quite another way, the controversy over the divinity or non-divinity of Jesus of Nazareth is dividing the Christian world into two opposing militant camps—the Fundamentalists and the Modernists, so-called.

FUNDAMENTALISTS VS MODERNISTS

The Fundamentalists, with whom I class myself and all Latter-day Saints, in a general way, are those who adhere to the old and established belief that Jesus Christ was the very Son of God, born of a virgin mother; that he was the author of the resurrection, the giver of eternal life, and withal a worker of miracles. We verily believe that he walked upon water, turned water into wine, healed the sick, cast out devils, gave sight to the blind, caused the lame to walk, and did many other mighty and marvelous works, all by virtue of the divine power within him.

The Modernists, who regard themselves as advanced thinkers, as the intellectually "quick," while their opponents are the spiritually "dead," look upon Jesus as a good and great man, the wisest and noblest teacher that the world has ever known. But they scout the idea of his being a miracle-worker, or the author and giver of eternal life. They do not positively deny that he could have worked a miracle, had he been so minded; they are simply not convinced that he could or did. This I believe is a fair statement of their position.

Many years ago, when I was a ward bishop in this city, a Primary Association conference was held one Sunday evening in the ward chapel. One of the sisters, gathering the little tots around her on the stand, told them the story of Jesus feeding the multitude in the miraculous manner set forth in the New Testament. Going home that night, one of the mothers, anxious to impress the lesson upon the mind of her little son, asked him certain questions concerning it. "What did Sister Blank tell us this evening?" The boy replied: "She told us how the Savior fed the people." How many people? "Five thousand." "And what did he feed them with?" "Five loaves of bread and two fishes." "Well, now," said the mother, "how do you suppose he could do that?" The little fellow mused a moment, and then blurted out: "Well, I don't believe those in the middle got any."

He was a Modernist. He did not believe in miracles. He did not realize that it was by divine power that this marvelous deed was done. His child mind could not allow for the difference—the vast difference between the omnipotence of Almighty God and the puny strength of mortal man. And that's the trouble with many grown up children at the present time.

They who doubt the divinity of Jesus Christ can hardly be expected to believe in the wonderful works wrought by him. But

they who accept him as the Son of God can accept his miracles also, the problem resolving itself into a simple question of cause and effect.

“NATURAL SUPERNATURALISM”

Men say that they do not believe in miracles because they are contrary to the laws of nature. “What are the laws of Nature?” asks Carlyle, and answers his own question thus:

“To me perhaps the rising of one from the dead were no violation of these laws, but a confirmation, if some far deeper law, now first penetrated into, and by spiritual force, even as the rest have all been, were brought to bear on us with its material force.

“‘But is it not the deepest law of Nature that she be constant?’ cries an illuminated class. ‘Is not the machine of the universe fixt to move by unalterable rules?’ Probable enough, good friends * * * And now of you, too, I make the old inquiry: What those same unalterable rules, forming the complete statute book of Nature, may possibly be?

“‘They stand written in our works of science,’ say you; ‘in the accumulated record of man’s experience.’ Was man with his experience present at the creation, then, to see how it all went on? Have any deepest scientific individuals yet dived down to the foundations of the universe, and gauged everything there? Did the Maker take them into his counsel, that they read his ground-plan of the incomprehensible All, and can say, This stands marked therein, and no more than this? Alas, not in any wise!

“To the minnow, every cranny and pebble and quality and accident of its little native creek may have become familiar; but does the minnow understand the ocean tides and periodic currents, the trade winds and monsoons and moon’s eclipses, by all of which the condition of its little creek is regulated, and may, from time to time (unmiraculously enough) be quite upset and reversed? Such a minnow is man; his creek this planet earth; his ocean the immeasurable All; his monsoons and periodic currents the mysterious force of Providence through aeons of aeons.”—*Sartor Resartus*.

MIRACLES, THE FRUITS OF FAITH

I need but add to this masterly philosophic defense, that it were indeed a pitiful begging of the question for any one to say: Because I cannot do a certain thing, therefore it cannot be done; I cannot work a miracle, consequently no miracle was ever wrought. Miracles are the fruits of faith. Nobody claims that unbelief can perform them.

Time will not permit me to pursue this subject further, nor is it necessary that I should do so. Before sitting down, however, I would like to touch upon another topic, suggested by Carlyle’s pointed question: “Was man present at the Creation?”

WHEN MORNING STARS SANG TOGETHER

A similar question was once put to a righteous man named Job, whom God answered "out of the whirlwind," saying: "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare if thou hast understanding * * * When the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy?" (Job 38:1-7.)

Job does not seem to have answered the question. Perhaps he did not have sufficient "understanding," and, unlike the "illuminated class" mentioned, would not assume to know what he did not know. But another righteous man named Abraham, who lived four centuries before the time of Job, had virtually answered that question; and his answer slept for two thousand years in the wrappings of a mummy in the catacombs of Egypt, awaiting the hour when Joseph Smith would give to the world his translation of the Book of Abraham. Therein the Father of the Faithful says:

ABRAHAM AND PRE-EXISTENCE

"Now the Lord had shown unto me, Abraham, the intelligences that were organized before the world was; and among all these there were many of the noble and great ones;

"And God saw these souls that they were good, and he stood in the midst of them, and he said: These I will make my rulers; for he stood among those that were spirits, and he saw that they were good; and he said unto me: Abraham, thou art one of them; thou wast chosen before thou wast born.

"And there stood one among them that was like unto God, and he said unto those who were with him: We will go down, for there is space there, and we will take of these materials, and we will make an earth whereon these may dwell;

"And we will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them;

"And they who keep their first estate shall be added upon; and they who keep not their first estate shall not have glory in the same kingdom with those who keep their first estate; and they who keep their second estate shall have glory added upon their heads forever and ever." (Abraham 3:22-26.)

How majestic! How sublime! And how wonderfully comprehensive! Surely the Book of Abraham bears testimony to its own divine origin. The sublimity of its doctrines and the spirit accompanying them are proof positive that they came right down from heaven.

BISHOP SPALDING AND THE SPEAKER

I bear in mind a conversation that I had with the late Bishop Franklin S. Spalding, of the Episcopal Church, whose untimely accidental death some years ago we all deeply deplored. He had attacked the Book of Abraham in a published commentary, and was

answered by a number of our brethren through the press. Soon afterwards I met the Bishop, with whom I was quite well acquainted, and he said to me: "Why have *you* not answered me?" "I have," was my reply; "I have been answering you all over the country, but it hasn't gotten into the papers." "Oh, indeed, and what have you been saying?" he inquired. "I have been saying this:

"Truth is truth, where'er 'tis found,
On Christian or on heathen ground."

"And whether it be taken from an ancient hill in North America, as was the Book of Mormon; or from the catacombs of Egypt, as was the Book of Abraham, if it's true, it's true, no matter who translated it, or how many supposed flaws appear in the translation. The character of the content and the spirit that goes along with it, determines better than all else its truth, its authenticity. We know Shakespeare's writings by the very sound of them—they have the Shakespearean ring. Literary experts can tell the difference between those writings and all others. We recognize Milton's poetry by the Miltonic ring; the poetry of Byron and Tennyson by the Byronic or Tennysonian ring. Then, if God speaks, why should it not have a Godlike ring, something that no man can counterfeit, nor any but a spiritual expert fully appreciate?"

Bishop Spalding agreed with me. Not as to the Book of Abraham, but as to the best way of testing any book. "I am one with you," he said, "in the belief that the highest evidence of the truth of any work is the spirit that it breathes and the wisdom that it inculcates." "Then," said I, "this Book of Abraham needs no defense from me, nor from anyone else. It speaks for itself; it defends itself. By the majesty of its language, by the sublimity of its teachings and by the Spirit that permeates them, it proclaims itself divine."

A GRAMMATICAL ERROR

Prior to that time I had a conversation with another would-be censor of our sacred books. He accosted me on the street with the question: "Bishop Whitney, do you believe the Book of Mormon to be the word of God?" "I certainly do," said I. "Well, can't God speak grammatically?" "Of course he can." "Then why was this grammatical error left in the Book of Mormon?"—and he quoted it. "Do you really want to know?" "Yes," he said. "Well, I think that was left there just to keep you out of the Church."

He seemed surprised: "Doesn't God want me in his Church?" "No," I said; "he only wants honest seekers after truth; and if you think more of a grammatical error than you do of your soul's salvation, you are not fit for the kingdom of heaven, and the Lord doesn't want you."

He was astonished. It was something he hadn't thought of. He felt very much as Goliath did when the stone sank into his forehead—such a thing had never entered his head before.

THE CREATION TWO-FOLD

Back now to the Book of Abraham: "And then the Lord said, Let us go down. And they went down at the beginning, and they, that is the Gods, organized and formed the heavens and the earth."

The creation was two-fold, firstly, spiritual; secondly, temporal. All divine creations have a spirit, even the trees and the flowers. In other words, they are souls, spirit and body combined. A learned man who was a chemist set himself to the task of making a grain of wheat, in imitation of one produced by the God of nature. Taking such a grain, he separated it into its component parts, finding that there was so much lime, so much silica, so much of this element and that, in its composition. Then, taking just such proportions of each element, he brought them together by his chemical skill and created a grain of wheat, so exactly similar to the natural grain, that the eye could not detect the difference. But there was a difference—a vast difference. He planted the two grains, and the one that God made sprang up, while the one that man made stayed down. God's wheat grain had a spirit; the other had none.

"There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth it understanding." There is a spirit in all of our Father's creations. They were made "for a wise and glorious purpose," and will be perpetuated in the great hereafter. The poet Byron, in a cynical epitaph on the monument of his favorite dog, wrote: "Denied in heaven the soul he held on earth." But "Mormonism" teaches no such doctrine. Joseph Smith declared that not only the human race, but the lower orders of the animal creation were designed for eternal felicity. And John the Revelator teaches the same doctrine in the sublime symbolism of the Apocalypse.

PURPOSES OF EARTH LIFE

This earth was created, not out of nothing, as antiquated theology asserts; but out of eternal spirit and eternal element; and it is but one of millions like it that have been created, peopled and redeemed by the same All-wise God, who has placed his children here, primarily to give their spirits bodies, that they might become souls, capable of endless increase and advancement; also that it might be seen whether they would do all that the Lord requires at their hands.

We are here for education and development, through joy and sorrow, through smiles and tears, through pleasure and pain, bitter and sweet, light and darkness, enduring the vicissitudes

and contrasts of mortal life, that we may become wise and gain a glorious experience. And if we now walk by faith, as we once walked by sight, and keep this second estate as we kept the first, or spirit estate (and were "added upon" for so doing), we shall reap the promised reward and "have glory added upon our heads forever and ever."

CARLYLE ANSWERED

Yes, Carlyle, man *was* present at the creation—but not with his mortal experience, nor yet with his mortal blindness. With clear, unclouded vision we looked on while the foundations of the earth were laid; and it was because we could see past the gloom to the glory that lay beyond, that "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy."

ELDER DAVID O. MCKAY

"Wherefore of these men * * * must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection."

THE GREATEST OF ALL MIRACLES

The greatest of all miracles is being celebrated by the Christian world today in the world-wide festival called Easter. Elder Whitney has referred to the reasonableness of the miracles of Jesus Christ. I say the greatest of all miracles is his resurrection from the dead; professed followers of the risen Lord are celebrating, in form at least, this great miracle. We have heard today that many people reject the reality of the resurrection of the Lord. They believe, or profess to believe, in his teachings, but do not believe in the immaculate conception, nor in his literal resurrection from the grave; yet, this latter fact was the very foundation of the early Christian church. The passage I have just read in your hearing is contained in the first chapter of Acts, and is accepted as being the testimony of Peter, the chief apostle on the occasion when the eleven had met to choose one to take the place of Judas Iscariot. It always interests me to study about the class of men that surrounded the apostles at that time, from whom the apostles chose this special witness. They were men who had been "witnesses" of the resurrection. Only such a one was considered eligible and worthy to be chosen one of the Twelve Apostles. I read further:

"This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

"Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear."

Peter then continues:

"Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: