

ELDER SYLVESTER Q. CANNON*Presiding Bishop of the Church*

I realize, my brethren and sisters, that the time is short and very precious this afternoon. I rejoice with you in the testimonies and instructions that we have received in this conference, because they are true and are for the welfare of all the people of the Church, and for all mankind. I rejoice in the fact that we are living in the dispensation which has been spoken about frequently in the sessions of this conference—the dispensation of the fulness of times, the last great dispensation of the gospel which the Lord has to give. This dispensation has been looked forward to in the past. The Apostle Paul foretold this time when the Lord should gather together in Christ all things that are in heaven and in the earth. It is the time preparatory to the coming again of the Savior—the Lord Jesus Christ—to reign this time upon the earth in peace and in glory. He came nineteen hundred years ago in humility and sorrow to accomplish the atoning work that was before him to do.

History repeats itself, we are told. It appears to me that there is a comparison between the dispensation of the meridian of time and this dispensation, in the sense that as the Savior had to have a forerunner at that time in the person of John the Baptist to prepare the way for his coming, in this dispensation there has come a forerunner; not one who should be able to prepare the way directly for the Savior and to see him upon the earth, but one who should prepare the way in the establishment of this dispensation, that the work might grow and the purposes of the Lord be accomplished in preparation for his great coming, when he shall come to reign during a thousand years. I rejoice that there has been restored in this dispensation that divine authority which the Prophet Joseph Smith received—that authority which had been lost from the earth for many hundred years. After the dispensation of the meridian of time, with the work which the apostles had carried on, the men and women who had accepted the gospel gradually apostatized from the truth, and the authority was lost. As the Prophet Isaiah declared, “The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant.”

That was the condition which prevailed for centuries during the dark ages; and then came the beginning of the dawn during the renaissance and the reformation. Men began to look forward to a greater time when truth and the fulness of the gospel should come to the earth. I am reminded of a statement made about the year 1600 by a man who was the leader among the Puritans who came to America. It is said that John Robinson, the pastor of the pilgrims, an old man of great vision and piety, who was left behind when the pilgrims sailed for America, charged them when they left Holland, “If God reveal anything to us by any other instrument of his, be as

ready to receive it as ever we were to receive any truth by his ministry," for he was very confident that the Lord had more truth and light yet to bring forth out of his holy word.

There were many such people who were looking forward to the time when the fulness of truth should be restored. And so when the gospel came and missionaries were sent out to various parts of the world, there were, such as in England, communities or congregations of people who were prepared to receive the truth in its fulness. I rejoice in the fact that this divine authority, the Priesthood of the Son of God, has been restored; whereby every man who is prepared and is worthy, who seeks to live in accordance with the principles of the gospel, may have the privilege of receiving this power and of laboring for the welfare of the Church, for the spread of the gospel, for the bringing together of all things in Christ, and for the accomplishment of his purposes.

I rejoice that we are possessed of this truth with regard to divine authority—which is very different from that which is called priesthood or ministry in the world—that the Lord has given to us opportunity whereby all men, as was the case in the previous dispensation, might be commissioned to labor for the welfare of others. I rejoice in the fact that from the time of the organization of this Church the leaders who have had the responsibility as watchmen upon the towers have declared the words and the will of the Lord and have warned the people, and that warning has been carried from them to others who bear the Priesthood, and through them to others, who have direct watchcare in the wards and branches; and thereby the people have been built up and strengthened and enabled to resist evil and temptation. If all the world would accept these truths, if all the world would accept the warnings with regard to the evils which do and which shall exist, and would accept wisdom and be willing to receive and to follow these instructions through the light that comes to them or that can come to them, the world would be very much better for it, and the time would be ripe much sooner for the coming of the Son of man.

The Lord can give unto us light only as we will receive it. Only as we open the windows and doors of our houses can the sunlight enter in and cleanse and strengthen and bring life and light to that house and overcome unhealthfulness. And so only as we open the windows and doors of our souls to the holy Spirit can truth enter in and strengthen and develop us and make us more healthy spiritually. This is the message which the authorities of this Church have had and have today to bring to the people everywhere, not only to the Latter-day Saints; primarily, of course, to them, but to all mankind: That if they will resist and overcome evil and temptation, if they will accept and obey this gospel, they shall grow in the knowledge of the truth, they shall develop those qualities that will make them better men and women, they shall increase in the spirit of love for their fellowmen, they shall enjoy true happiness, and be prepared to meet the Lord.

I pray that the Lord will help every one of us to sense our oppor-

tunities and to listen and render obedience to the instructions that come to us. They are for our welfare, not for the welfare of any other human being, but for us individually. Every commandment of the Lord is for our development and progress and growth. The Lord will hasten the time when we shall promote and develop the spirit whereby we shall be able to live as of one heart and of one mind. May that time soon come and may we cultivate unity and love and peace and joy, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

A solo, "My Redeemer and my Lord," was sung by Mrs. Joseph Haycock.

PRESIDENT HEBER J. GRANT

Presented the General Authorities and Officers of the Church, who were voted upon and unanimously sustained, as follows:

GENERAL AUTHORITIES OF THE CHURCH

FIRST PRESIDENCY

Heber J. Grant, Prophet, Seer and Revelator, and President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Anthony W. Ivins, First Counselor in the First Presidency.

Charles W. Nibley, Second Counselor in the First Presidency.

PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES

Rudger Clawson

COUNCIL OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES

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Reed Smoot

George Albert Smith

George F. Richards

Orson F. Whitney

David O. McKay

Joseph Fielding Smith

James E. Talmage

Stephen L. Richards

Richard R. Lyman

Melvin J. Ballard

John A. Widtsoe

PRESIDING PATRIARCH

Hyrum G. Smith

The Counselors in the First Presidency, the Twelve Apostles and the Presiding Patriarch as Prophets, Seers and Revelators.

FIRST COUNCIL OF THE SEVENTY

Brigham H. Roberts

Jonathan G. Kimball

Rulon S. Wells

Joseph W. McMurrin

Charles H. Hart

Levi Edgar Young

Rey L. Pratt

PRESIDING BISHOPRIC

Sylvester Q. Cannon, Presiding Bishop

David A. Smith, First Counselor

John Wells, Second Counselor