

study, through faith, through perseverance, and through living in full accord with the ordinances of the gospel.

May the Lord bless and guide us, I pray, in all things, that we may be steadfast in the truth in these days of peril, these days when there are so many false doctrines prevailing in the world and men are striving to destroy the fundamental teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. May we stand firm and faithful in the spirit of prayer, the spirit of faith and with a perfect testimony of the truth, I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER RULON S. WELLS

Of the First Council of Seventy

I have been greatly impressed by the spirit of this conference, and with the fact that the Lord has set his hand to do a marvelous work and a wonder among the inhabitants of the earth in the day and age in which we live. It is, indeed, a marvelous and wonderful work that was portrayed to us so beautifully, in the meeting this morning, by Elder Orson F. Whitney. It has been accompanied by the most miraculous occurrences, and it is not a great wonder that many people have questioned its truth.

We are living in a day of agnosticism, a day when there is but little faith among the children of men. The great thing in connection with these miraculous occurrences is the introduction, among our Father's children, of those principles and doctrines that have within them the power of God unto salvation.

What is the work of God? We read in the opening paragraph of the Bible:

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

"And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

"And God said, Let there be light: and there was light."

Thus began, according to Holy Writ, the great work of creation; and there followed the creation of man in the image of God.

What is God's work, of which we speak as this marvelous work and a wonder? It is the great plan of life and salvation. God created the heavens and the earth, and we look up into the starry heavens, with wonder and amazement at the grandeur and the glory of this universe in the midst of which we live. We see the blazing sun at noonday and our hearts are thrilled with the wonder of it; and we learn of the motions of those heavenly bodies and our hearts are filled with amazement and wonder at the glory of this wonderful creation; and we ask the question, Whose work is this? We may read the answer in the opening verse of the Holy Scriptures: It is the work of God.

But is that all that is contemplated in this great work of God? Is that the great thing that God has in mind? The Lord spake unto

his servant Moses, and his words unto that mighty prophet read like this: "This is my work and my glory, to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man." The saving of human souls, redeeming them from the fall, exalting them, and bringing them back into the presence of God, is to bring to pass their immortality and eternal life. It is not sufficient that we live here upon the earth. This is but one phase in the progress of the children of God. This mighty work of God began before the foundations of this earth were laid. What do we know about the things that happened before the foundations of this earth were laid? I grant you that very little has been revealed, but that little is full of meaning. The Lord spake unto his servant Job and said:

"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?"

True enough; where was Job then? My brethren and sisters, where were we? We stood in the presence of our Maker; we stood in the presence of our Eternal Father—his begotten children in the spirit. What was the occasion that filled our hearts with joy? It was the promulgation of this glorious plan, whereby the children of God might become exalted and be saved in the kingdom of God, that we might have our part in that great work which the Lord instituted among his children even in that primeval day, that involved the creation of this world, the placing of our Father's children upon it in tabernacles of flesh and bones. It involved the fall, because we were free agents, and without the experience of an earth life there would be no possibility of an exaltation.

The principle of progress is involved in the experiences that we have upon this earth. The plan was announced. It was one of free agency, the right to choose between good and evil. Are you willing to take the chances of an earth-life, with the recollection of your previous existence taken from you, and live in a world of sin, tempted by the adversary of the children of men? Are you willing to be proved, whether or not you will do all things whatsoever the Lord will require of you? The announcement was made and a covenant made with the children of God, even in that primeval day, when he revealed the gospel of the Lord Jesus to the children of God. Even then, it was the power of God unto salvation, the new and the everlasting covenant that the Lord made with his children. If you will do these things and prove yourselves, you will receive an exaltation in the celestial kingdom of God. And our hearts were filled with joy inexplicable, even to overflowing, and we shouted for joy over the glad tidings that had been made known unto us even in that primeval day.

The plan involved the sending of one mighty and strong. The question arose, Whom shall I send? And there arose in that mighty multitude the first-born of all the children of God, who said, "Here

am I, send me." "Thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever." But there was another in that assembly who objected to the great plan that was evolved, that of free agency, and he arose in that mighty multitude and said, "Here am I send me, I will be thy son, and I will redeem all mankind that one soul shall not be lost." Compulsion, that. "Surely I will do it;" said he, "wherefore give me thine honor." And God said, "I will send the first." And Satan grew angry, for Satan it was who had spoken thus, and he rebelled against God. He had been busy beforehand, laboring among the children of God, deceiving them with his sophistries. And there was war in heaven, and Satan prevailed not, for the Lord sent the first, and Satan was cast out of heaven.

The all-important thing for the inhabitants of this world, then, is this, to believe on Him whom God did send, and reject the message of him whom God did not send but cast out of heaven. For the war, begun in heaven, was continued here on earth among the children of men, and Satan is abroad in the land endeavoring to lead the children of God away here as there, continuing his work of destroying the souls of men. To believe on Jesus Christ, then, is the all-important thing. Believe on him and thou shalt be saved. And when I say believe on him, I mean a living faith in him, and in his glorious gospel, for, as then, it is now the power of God unto salvation. A man may not say that he believes on him and reject his gospel. A man who has a living faith in him lives not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God, and accepts of the plan of him whom God sent into the world, rejecting the plan of the adversary. To accept the plan of our Savior is to have faith. To reject the plan of the adversary, with all his sophistry, his false religion, his deception, his evil and all combined, to resent and resist that, and to turn away from it, is to overcome sin.

There is only one way, and that is to accept of him whom God sent, and his glorious gospel, which has been restored in the day and age in which we live. That which was first given to father Adam and in various dispensations of God's providence has been revealed anew to the children of men. Let us then have faith in him. There is no other name given under heaven whereby men and women can be saved, no other plan, no other gospel. There is but one faith, one Lord and one baptism; and that baptism, and that faith, and that Lord have been revealed to the children of men in this dispensation of his gospel, and now, in the day in which we live, the gospel restored in all of its primitive purity, having in it the power of God;—a marvelous work and wonder for the salvation and exaltation of the children of God.

May we accept that message, live in accordance with it, and thereby be entitled to an exaltation wherein our Father will fulfil the covenant that he made with us in that primeval day. Let us take advantage of it, and lift up our voices to all the world, that they may hear the glad tidings which God has sent into this world, through his Only Begotten Son, I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.