

ELDER MELVIN J. BALLARD

I desire to read a poem recently discovered among the writings of our gifted hymn writer, Elder Parley P. Pratt:

"Truth eternal, truth divine!
In thine ancient fulness shine;
Burst the fetters of the mind
From the millions of mankind,
Set the longing nations free,
Give the world a jubilee.

"Ages past have owned thy sway,
Prophets hailed thy joyful day;
In thy cause in days of yore
Battle-fields were stained with gore,
Saints and seers and heroes fought,
Men and angels wonders wrought.

"Truth again restored to earth,
Opened with a prophet's birth,
Priests of heaven's royal line,
Bearing keys of truth divine,
Wide o'er earth the tidings flew,
Truth into a kingdom grew.

"Truth shall triumph as the light
Chases far the misty night,
Hurl the tyrant from his throne,
Conquer death, and reign alone,
Endless ages own its sway,
Clad in everlasting day."

TRUTH WILL PREVAIL

I desire in this connection to read the following verses from the 88th section of the Doctrine and Covenants:

"And again, verily I say unto you, that which is governed by law is also preserved by law and perfected and sanctified by the same.

"That which breaketh a law, and abideth not by law, but seeketh to become a law unto itself, and willetth to abide in sin, and altogether abideth in sin, cannot be sanctified by law, neither by mercy, justice, nor judgment. Therefore, they must remain filthy still."

I desire to add, in connection with these inspired utterances, a word of warning and testimony in connection with that which has been borne by my brethren to the Latter-day Saints assembled in conference this morning. I am happy to find myself in full accord with all that has been expressed. But I do feel in my soul that we have reached the day spoken of by the prophets of old, and by the Lord himself in this generation, when everything will be shaken that can be shaken, and nothing shall remain except that which is truth and is established by the Lord. It was easy, in the dark ages, for a glimmer of truth to attract the attention of men who were in such dense darkness, but it is not easy for a small glimmer of truth to attract attention in an age when the blaze of light is so resplendent as to be seen everywhere.

A TESTING TIME

More light and knowledge has come to the earth in this generation than in all ages before—and a religion that can attract the attention of men and can stand the scrutiny of investigation and shine in the presence of light such as the world enjoys today, is an unusual religion. There is nothing so sacred, nor ancient, but must meet the sifting process that presently will be in operation. For it is the age when everything is being questioned. How has Mormonism stood? How will it stand in this period of testing? It has stood the trials of the past. It stands today vindicated in its teachings, even in the presence of science, learning, knowledge and history. It will stand in the future.

I recognize the foundation upon which it has been established as the truth, and how my heart grows in faith, my understanding increases and my soul is filled with joy to witness the strength and power of this Church, even in this age of doubt and of uncertainty.

A spirit of doubt and uncertainty is creeping over the faith of the world. We were told in an address by an eminent minister at a gathering of religionists in California during this last summer, that sixty per cent of the people of the United States have no religious affiliation; that twenty-five million young people in the United States are growing up without any religious teaching.

I confess to you that it is also a time when institutions that God established, that are political, will be shaken, but, thank the Lord, they will stand, for they too are the truth.

OUR NATION'S SECURITY

The Prophet Joseph told us that he saw the day when even the Constitution of the United States would be torn and hang as by a thread. But, thank the Lord, the thread did not break. He saw the day when this people would be a balance of power to come to its defense. The Book of Mormon prophecies concerning the future of America have been referred to in our hearing during this conference, wherein it is stated that this nation, though it becomes a mighty nation, still it can stand in security here only as it serves the God of this land. That conception was in the hearts of the men who founded America.

I was recently looking over some of the utterances of our fathers who established these glorious institutions. One of the great statesmen of our land, Webster, said:

"If we abide by the principles taught in the Bible, our country will go on prospering and to prosper, but if we or our posterity neglect its instructions and authority, no man can tell how suddenly catastrophe may overwhelm us and bury all our glory in profound obscurity."

Washington in his farewell address said:

"Let it simply be asked, Where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the oaths, which are the instruments of investigation in courts of justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. What-

ever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle."

When Benjamin Franklin, eighty years of age, stood before the Congress of the United States, trying to produce an instrument on which they could frame the Constitution, and they being about to abandon that effort, he made this appeal which won these men to God and to the accomplishment of the great purpose of establishing our Constitution:

"In the beginning of the contest with Great Britain, when we were sensible of danger, we had daily prayers in this room for divine protection. Our prayers, sir, were heard; and they were graciously answered. All of us who were engaged in the struggle must have observed frequent instances of a superintending Providence in our favor. To that kind Providence we owe this happy opportunity of consulting in peace on the means of establishing our future national felicity. And have we now forgotten that powerful Friend? Or do we imagine that we no longer need His assistance? I have lived, sir, a long time; and the longer I live the more convincing proofs I see of this truth—that God governs in the affairs of men; and if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid? We have been assured, sir, in sacred writings, that 'except the Lord build the house they labor in vain that build it.' I firmly believe this; and I also believe that without His concurring aid we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel."

This was the spirit of the men who established America. May God keep that spirit burning forever in the hearts of the men who continue to lead it. I want to say that I have discovered that that spirit has been in the hearts of the men and is in the hearts of the men who preside over the destinies of America, though it may not be in the hearts of all the people. They announced their faith when they blazoned upon our coin the motto, "In God we trust." They breathed it into their songs when they said:

"Our fathers' God to thee,
Author of liberty,
To thee we sing—"
"Long may our land be bright
With Freedom's holy light,
Protect us by thy might,
Great God, our King!"

Other nations might boast of their kings, but the King of America, proclaimed by the patriotic fathers who founded it and established it, is the great God of heaven. This must continue to be the sentiment of the people of America if these glorious institutions shall be preserved, and in our hands is the sacred keeping of these great and glorious principles.

THE ATTITUDE OF THE CHURCH

The Latter-day Saints have taken a very definite stand in reference to their attitude towards the government, and towards the great problems of life. Have we had to shift our position? Has it been assailed successfully? When we have declared our loyalty and patriotism

to the Constitution and the government, and that we recognize that the duty of the Latter-day Saints is to uphold and support the laws of the land as faithfully as they do the laws of the Church, were we right? Any people who depart from that will not be able to preserve a civilization very long. Are we right in the promulgation of the doctrine that we have advocated of the single standard of virtue, wherein we require the young man of our Church to be as clean and as pure as the girl he asks to be his wife, the mother of his children? Are we right in our conception of marriage for time and for eternity? Have we had to recede from that position? In the building of this family relationship, of which we have heard, forever and forever we stand upon solid ground and cannot be shaken from it. In the glorious conception we have of the redemption of our dead, extending to those who died and passed beyond the veil without opportunity, that through the vicarious work God has established in his Church, these holy blessings may come to them, are we right? Have we had to recede from that position? In the promulgation of the doctrine of the law of tithing, wherein each man is placed under a certain obligation to the Lord to pay his tenth, whether he be rich or whether he be poor, are we right? Have we had to recede from that position? No, men are growing in numbers who acknowledge the righteousness of the plan. Are we right in our missionary system that calls forth these thousands of young men and women who freely give themselves and pay their way to go to the ends of the world to preach this gospel? Are we right or are we wrong? We know we are right. The principle has been acknowledged as the finest plan by which the gospel message may be carried to the children of men.

Recently an eminent professor said to the General Board of the Young Men's and Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Associations, in discussing the question of the ills of modern youth: "The 'Mormon' Church is founded and established very well, better than any other institution in the world, and has opportunities to hold its young people, for you give them something to fight for. You put a responsibility upon them and send them forth to champion a cause. You will hold them as long as you have something worth fighting for." And we have.

I could go through each principle of the gospel that has been revealed to us and show, I am sure, my brethren and sisters, that the attitude of the leaders of this Church affecting the lives of the people as to the solution of the great problems of this age is right, and that each principle is right.

A NEW TEST

I do not fear all the tests that are before us. I have recognized now for some time past that a new test is coming to the Saints—the test of peace and of prosperity. The most severe test that has ever come to any people is the test of peace and prosperity. Having survived the troubles of the past I am as sure as that I live that this

Church, the great majority of this people, will stand the test of peace and of prosperity. Though many may fall, though many may hesitate and falter, this work is established to stand forever, and never to fail. It is founded upon the truth.

A GLORIOUS AGE

Who wants to hesitate now? Who wants to desert the ranks in such a glorious cause which is presently to be triumphant and victorious? There never has been an age in all the glorious past when there was such an opportunity for the truth as today. This age of questioning is all in favor of truth. Let error vanish, let superstition and ignorance go; it is the age when the truth shall be triumphant. Those who know the truth have reason to take courage and to be affiliated with those who are the champions of truth, for it is the age of truth's victory. It will come. Yes, not only shall the doctrines and the theories of men be shaken, but the very earth itself. This is the age when it too is to be shaken; and this was all understood by the Master who built the earth, the Lord Jesus Christ. Worlds without number he has made, and he knows how they will behave and when they will misbehave; he knows the period of the earth's convulsions. Whatever may be the cause of our present unusual storms, cyclones and disturbances, whether they are caused by sun spots or what not—he who made this world knew when would come the period of its misbehavior, as accurately as the astronomer can forecast the coming of an eclipse. And he knew that this disturbance bore a certain relationship to other great and important events, namely, his coming to dwell among men in the flesh.

I bear witness to you that God is speaking in the interest of truth and in the interest of the establishment of his work, even by the very elements: and he will speak in an effort to cause men in their mad rush for pleasure to stop, to ponder, to ask themselves whether or not God be in the affairs of men. May men repent, may they save themselves by accepting the principles of the gospel. God himself cannot save them, only as they comply with the rules of eternal truth. If they disregard them they put themselves beyond his power. He can do nothing for them.

GOD'S PROMISES TO BE REALIZED

I bear witness that I know as I know I live that this is God's work and that Jesus Christ did visit the earth. I know that he did speak to the Prophet Joseph Smith, that the Book of Mormon is the very truth, and that Mormonism is indeed God's work, founded and established to endure. Let us go home and kindle the fire, where it is burning low, in the hearts of the wayward, the careless and indifferent. There is only one protection for us, and that is to keep the commandments of God. If we will do that I will tell you that the period now before us will be full of blessings, full of promise, full of hope and full of glory for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I

know that the glorious future is more wonderful than all the past. It is a time for men and women to re-dedicate themselves to God and his service, not to be tired nor weary in well doing. The future is so full of promise, the realization of all that has been promised in the revelations of the Lord to his servants will be realized. I am more grateful than I can express this day for my standing in this Church, in this glorious work. God speed it forward and keep us in its ranks, that we and our children may be counted with the victorious in that day of triumph which is to come. God speed that day, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

The choir sang the anthem, "Awake my soul."

The benediction was offered by Elder Alonzo A. Hinckley, President of the Deseret stake.

Conference adjourned until 2:00 p. m.

AFTERNOON MEETING

The closing session of the conference was held in the tabernacle on Sunday afternoon, October 7, 1928, at 2 o'clock.

President Heber J. Grant presided.

The choir and congregation sang, "The Spirit of God like a fire is burning."

The invocation was offered by Elder James W. Funk, President of the Benson stake.

The choir sang the anthem, "Gloria."

ELDER REED SMOOT

I am thankful to my Heavenly Father for the privilege of attending this remarkable conference, for to me it has been a most remarkable one in so many ways. The instructions given, the testimonies borne, the interest shown by the thousands attending each session, and no doubt other thousands listening in by radio, must be most gratifying to all who are interested in the welfare and growth of God's Latter-day work.

WORK NECESSARY FOR PROGRESS OF CHURCH

I pray that what I may say at this time will be acceptable to our Heavenly Father and will inspire in the hearts of the saints a greater determination to serve God, keep his commandments, and *work, work, work*, to bring about God's great plan as revealed to his Prophet, Joseph, in this the last dispensation, the dispensation of the fulness of times. The lazy, the indolent have little place in carrying forward God's plans. This is so in this age, and has been from the beginning, and will continue to be so until the end. The growth of the Church has not been accomplished by the idler, the fault-finder, the whiner, the