

ELDER HYRUM G. SMITH

Presiding Patriarch of the Church

I am very grateful, my brethren and sisters, to have this privilege of seeing this house so well filled in another annual conference of the Church. I heartily accord with the wonderful testimonies and teachings which have been given during the conference, and am grateful for the privilege of bearing my testimony, thus mingling my voice with the voices of my brethren.

OUR BLESSINGS

Many of the brethren have expressed appreciation for the blessings which have come to the Church, each one of them having said something pertaining to our great blessings; and I have thought during the singing and the speaking of the conference that surely the Lord has guided and blessed it.

I would like to refer to one verse of the beautiful song that was sung today by the choir, which points particularly to the thought of our blessings. These lines have clung to my memory:

“The Gentile fulness now comes in,
And Israel’s blessings are at hand;
Lo! Judah’s remnant, cleansed from sin,
Shall in their promised Canaan stand.”

I have wondered what claim we hold upon those wonderful blessings, and yet each one of the brethren has explained and borne testimony to the kindness and mercy of the Lord in bringing about these particular times in which we live and the promises of the Lord to his chosen Israel throughout the different times of the world.

THE BLESSINGS OF EPHRAIM AND MANASSEH

I am trying to bring to you a thought that has been prevalent in my own mind relative to these important promises, and I have in mind the great blessings which were given by the great patriarch Jacob to his grandsons Ephraim and Manasseh. When these two lads were taken to their grandfather for their blessings, their grandfather was feeble and dim of sight because of his age. There seems to have been a peculiar custom in those times that when a thing of this kind happened the older son was to receive the blessing of the right hand and the younger son the blessing of the left hand. But for some reason which was not explained, only that the patriarch said that he knew what he was doing, when his son Joseph was perturbed in his feelings Jacob in blessing these two boys crossed his arms, placing his right hand upon the younger and his left hand upon the older, and blessed Ephraim first. In his explanation to Joseph, the father of these boys, Jacob said: Manasseh shall become great, and he shall receive his blessings; but Ephraim shall become greater, and he shall be a multitude of nations.

You heard in the report made by the President of the Church

relative to the growth of the Church, that there are today more than one hundred stakes of Zion. It is the policy and order of the Church at the present time to have at least one patriarch, who is authorized to bless the members of the stake, and in so doing, declare their lineage, in a similar way to the manner in which Jacob blessed his grandsons, and his own sons. At the present time in the Church the great majority of those receiving their blessings are declared to be of the house and lineage of Ephraim, while many others are designated as members of the house of Manasseh; but up to the present time we have discovered that those who are leaders in Israel, no matter where they come from, no matter what nation they have come out of, are of Ephraim; while the blood of Manasseh is found in the tribes and nations of the Indians of North and South America. They are great, they are wonderfully blessed, but Ephraim seems to prevail in the greater blessings, greater in responsibility, and in faithfulness to the Lord's work. And so people have wondered about it. Why do the patriarchs declare that most of us are of Ephraim?

THE DAY OF EPHRAIM

It is my testimony that "today" is the day of Ephraim. It is the day which the Lord has set to fulfil his promises made in the times of the ancient patriarchs, when he said that he would scatter Israel to the four corners of the world, and that Ephraim should be scattered in all the nations, and then in the "last days" be gathered out again. Many are being gathered out by our missionaries, as "one of a family and two of a city;" and they are found here, gathered into a gathering place appointed of the Lord, and they are receiving his blessings. This is why so many of us are declared to be of Ephraim. If there were time I would like to speak further about our blessings. The Prophet Joseph Smith, was declared to be of this house of Joseph, a chosen vessel. Read II Nephi, chapter 3, relative to the promises made regarding him. But the principal point I have in mind at the present time is the fact that we may discover our lineage, or where we stand in Israel.

There have been discovered also, a few of the house of Israel who belong to the tribe of Levi,—an ancient priest. There are also a few of some other tribes of Israel, but very few except those of the house of Jacob, as represented by Ephraim in the great multitudes who are enjoying the blessings of the Church, and those who are of Manasseh—the great multitudes of Indians in North and South America.

THE LORD'S PROMISE UNTO NEPHI

The Prophet Nephi (a Manassehite), who was privileged to witness the progress and even the destruction of his people, received a particular promise from the Lord, wherein he was comforted in the fact that though his people would be chastised and destroyed they would not be utterly destroyed, but that they should be mixed with his brethren so that the blood and the blessings of the prophets of that people would not be utterly lost.—Through my experience in meeting up

with some of our visitors from the islands of the Pacific Ocean, I was able to discover that the natives of New Zealand and the natives of the Hawaiian Islands are chiefly of that mixed blood which the Lord promised should not be utterly destroyed, but that in the last days, through their faithfulness, should receive the blessings of the Lord and even become a white and delightsome people.

The promises of the Lord are being fulfilled and the blessings are being administered under his counsel through his holy servants.

I pray that the Lord will bless us and that he will continue to inspire the leaders of the Church to lead us in the ways that he would have us go, and that the promises that the Lord has made concerning Israel, (the Jews and others in the great house of Israel) may be rapidly realized.

“JUDAH’S REMNANT”

The Jews are preparing to return to the land that was given to them for their inheritance. Many of them have already returned. So “Judah’s remnant will receive their blessings in their promised Canaan.” However a few of the Jews have come into the Church.

THE LAW OF ADOPTION

We have also a number in the Church, who, so far as we are able to judge and learn, did not originally belong to the house of Israel at all. Then you say, where do they get their blessings? What is their lineage? Well, I explain that in this way: When you adopt a child that does not belong to you originally, and that child grows up in your family, it obtains its blessings the same as other members of your family. It is the same as your own. If I adopt a child that is born in the world I share my blessings with that child, as he shares his blessings with me. In my household I am responsible, he partakes at the same “table,” the same blessings. By the law of adoption that child receives his right to the blessings of my household, and therefore he belongs to my household through the law of adoption. Through our faithfulness we are all adopted into the fold of Christ. We are his and his blessings are upon us, through our faithfulness in obeying the laws of his Gospel. And so, if other people outside of the house of Israel have faith and obedience enough to come into the Church they will receive their lineage and blessings according to the house which they enter. If they enter into the family of Israel they will receive the same lineage as the house or tribe that adopted them, just the same as the adopted child receives the blessings of the family that adopted him.

That is my idea. I hope that I have made it clear. And so today we are discovering, through the kindness and mercy of the Lord, that his promises are being fulfilled and that his blessings are being received by those who are observing his laws and keeping his commandments.

TESTIMONY AND BLESSING

I have a testimony that this is the work of the Lord; that the

Prophet Joseph Smith was a prophet in very deed, the descendant of Joseph who was sold into Egypt, through the lineage of Ephraim, a promised vessel in the hands of the Lord; and that those who have succeeded him in the advancement and progress of the Church have also been inspired and blessed as chosen vessels in the hands of the Lord. I am very grateful for the testimony I have of the divinity of this work. I pray the Lord's blessing upon those who carry responsibility in the work entrusted to them,—President Grant and his associates, the General Authorities, you men and women who are laboring throughout the stakes and wards, in the Church schools and in the temples, also the brethren and sisters who are laboring in the mission field. I pray God's blessings upon you all and upon the entire Church and its membership and those who befriend it,—the honest in heart and the worthy throughout the world. May God's blessings go with you to your homes, and help you to serve the Lord and keep his commandments, and help to bring about his holy purposes, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

PRESIDENT HEBER J. GRANT

One of the regrets that we nearly always have in our conferences is that we do not seem to have quite time enough to hear from all of those whom we would like to hear. As you will see by the clock there are only twenty minutes left and we have yet four speakers. We will ask Brothers Charles H. Hart and J. Golden Kimball to occupy fifteen minutes between them, and we shall not have time to hear the others.

ELDER CHARLES H. HART

*Of the First Council of Seventy and President of the
Canadian Mission*

While traveling through the State of Vermont, last summer, territory newly added to the Canadian mission, while visiting the granite works at Barre, Vermont, my attention was called to an issue of *The Granite Cutter's Journal*, published in Quincy, Massachusetts, containing a splendid article entitled "The Mormon Battalion Monument", illustrated by four full pages of photographs of the monument. The editor said that one look at the photographs of the monument and he "realized that a single view of it would not be sufficient to bring out its great merit;" therefore all four photographs were reproduced.

A letter from the Secretary of the American Granite Association was quoted in part as follows:

"I think the monument is one of the finest things that has ever come to our attention in this office. It is strikingly original in the matter of design, and the photographs show that the carving around the base is executed with unusual delicacy and accuracy. Insofar as the photograph shows, I do not believe that there is another piece of granite carving anywhere in the country done in such delicate detail unless it is the Robert Burns Monument in Barre, Vermont."